

Congresswoman NYDIA M. VELAZQUEZ

Representing New York's 12th Congressional District

Ranking Democratic Member, House Small Business Committee



Velázquez Speaks Out Against DOL Office Closure



Congresswoman Velázquez spoke out at a press conference against the ETA's NY Regional office closure.

The Department of Labor (DOL) made a proposal to close its Employment and Training Administration (ETA) New York Regional office. This closure will affect 65 DOL employees who will be forced to either take a buy-out or relocate to an out-of-state office. Congresswoman Velázquez spoke out in opposition to the proposal during a press conference in March.

"New York City is suffering from an economic crisis," Congresswoman Velázquez said. "The city has lost 176,000 jobs in the past two years, many as a direct result of the terrorist attacks of September 11, and the state is seeking to borrow an additional \$860 million from the federal government to finance unemployment benefits for workers. Closing the ETA's New York Regional office could not have come at a worse time."

The New York Regional office oversees more than \$1 billion in employment and training funds for New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands each year. With more than 50,000 labor certification

applications pending, New York state currently has the worst delays in the country, as the New York Regional office is still processing applications from December 2001. Closing the ETA NY office will only create a further backlog of applicants waiting to receive benefits and services.

"Approximately 65 DOL employees, some who have worked here for more than 30 years, will have to make a difficult decision between taking a buy-out or uprooting their families and moving to Boston," Congresswoman Velázquez said. "I am astounded by this irresponsible and counterproductive decision to close this office while our city is still recovering from the terrorist attacks, the economy is crippled, and tens of thousands of people are out of work and in need of assistance."

\$750,000 for Chinatown Parking Project

Congresswoman Velázquez awarded the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA) with a check in the amount of \$750,000 in federal funding to be used for a transportation study and property renovation to assuage parking problems in Chinatown.

Due to its proximity to Ground Zero this area has witnessed a significant decline in parking availability. Many streets have been temporarily or permanently closed to the public. The new study will help determine how to maximize the space available to best accommodate the number of visitors and employees coming into Chinatown.

"This study will hopefully result in better access to the Lower East Side while more parking will ensure this vital economic and cultural section of our community continues to thrive," Congresswoman Velázquez said. "The advancement of transportation plans will impact the lives of many New Yorkers and will enhance economic development in Chinatown."



Left to Right: Eric Ng, Ning Yeung Association president, Congresswoman Velázquez, and Ting Din Ng, CCBA president, at the check presentation.

\$400,000 to Lower East Side Girls Club

The Lower East Side Girls Club of New York was awarded with a check in the amount of \$400,000. This federal funding was successfully secured by Congresswoman Velázquez for the construction of a multi-purpose, club-house facility.

“The Lower East Side Girls Club serves as a place for women of many different backgrounds to come together and build strong networks and relationships,” Congresswoman Velázquez said. “By providing this type of support within the community, the Girls Club encourages the well-being of women on the Lower East Side. Its commitment to helping local residents requires dedication and compassion, and for this, the Lower East Side Girls Club should be recognized for the great work they do each and every day.”

The new facility will contain a gymnasium, theater, classrooms, art studios, darkroom, computer technology and educational support, guidance and holistic care facilities and more. Construction of the site will begin in spring 2004.

The Lower East Side Girls Club serves more than 300 girls, ages 8 to 18, by providing them with a place to have fun, grow, learn and develop confidence in themselves. The Girls Club offers arts, athletic, cultural, life-skills and career-oriented programming, that provides girls with the vision to plan -- and the tools to build -- a bright future.



Left to Right: Lyn Pentecost, executive director, Adriana Pezzulli, director of development, and Congresswoman Velázquez at the check presentation.

Support for Reopening of Chinatown's Park Row

Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, State Senator Martin Connor, City Councilman Alan Gerson and Congresswoman Velázquez, met with New York City Police Commissioner Ray Kelly and New York City Department of Transportation Commissioner Iris Weinshall to urge the reopening of Park Row in Chinatown to buses and cars.

The Police Department closed Park Row between Worth Street and City Hall to civilian cars on September 11, 2001 and to MTA buses in May of 2002 and it has remained closed ever since. Each official present requested that the NYPD establish a task force with community representation to address the issue.

“The Chinatown area has seriously been impacted by September 11 and the reopening of Park Row is essential for the revitalization of this neighborhood,” Congresswoman Velázquez said. “We hope to achieve an amicable agreement that would protect and secure this area and at the same time promote tourism and economic development by easing the traffic flow in Chinatown. We are moving in the right direction by meeting to discuss how we can fix this problem.”

Grants Awarded to Our Community

Intersystems, Inc.....\$100,000 Funding for cancer control	New York State Dept. of Education.....\$347,312,000 Funding for Special Ed. Grants to State
New York Association for New Americans....\$188,849 Funding for assistance to victims of traffic accidents	New York State Dept. of Education.....\$37,508,795 Funding for Vocational Ed. Basic Grants to State
New York City.....\$32,466,292 Funding to assist people living with AIDS	New York Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped.....\$7,438,729 Funding for rehab services
New York City.....\$10,215,018 Funding for minority AIDS initiative to bolster care and services among minority population	New York Educational Vocal Services for Individuals with Disabilities.....\$36,320,375 Funding for rehab services
New York State.....\$260,121,205 Funding for low-income energy assistance funds	New York Commission on Quality of Care...\$225,664 Funding for rehab services
New York State Dept. of Education.....\$730,171,183 Funding for Title I money	New York State Dept. of Education.....\$316,170 Funding for Independent Living
New York State Dept. of Education.....\$21,847,401 Funding for Safe and Drug-Free Schools	New York City.....\$61,194,102 Funding to provide primary care and supportive services for low-income residents with HIV/AIDS